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faced with a similar proposal shortly after World War One. Said Sam Rayburn forty years ago: "From the days of Hamilton and Jefferson and Marshall down to now, every man who had a reputation that extended beyond the community in which he lived . . . has looked upon the question of confiscating private property for the satisfaction of a public obligation with obloquy. That has been our policy . . . the most savage doctrine ever announced by any people anywhere was that private property should be taken for the satisfaction of a public obligation."

Danger Ahead

1. A few weeks ago, pro-Communist groups in New York held a rally against "the wave of anti-Semitism and neo-fascism" that is engulfing the country (the words are the *Worker's*). The Communists' point is that anti-Semitism should only be pursued *inside* the Soviet Union, though to be sure they allow their point to remain implicit. It was another demonstration of the Communists' ruthless exploitation of human wretchedness for their own ends.

The rally came to the attention of three young and thoroughly undisciplined New Yorkers, by name Seth Ryan, Gilbert de Mello and Hugh Bruce, aged 21, 20, and 17. This trio has in recent years taken a lively interest in anti-Communist activities, it seems, but has not yet acquired the sense to distinguish between respectable anti-Communist organizations and those weird and distracted organizations which abound in New York and are infected with the disease of anti-Semitism, which in its most virulent form can do strange things to the vision: suddenly the world is not a world of Communists and non-Communists, but of Jews and non-Jews.

The three very angry young men gathered in Union Square shortly after the Communists had celebrated the recent anti-Semitic wave, and a loitering band recognized one of them as the fellow who had held high a placard calling for "FREEDOM FOR LATVIA, POLAND AND HUNGARY," and another equating the swastika and the hammer and sickle. Insults were traded. The three young men, in a lunatic impulse, approached one group, extended the Nazi salute, and shouted "Heil Hitler!", then did the same to another group of loiterers. The temperature rose. A policeman was called. A rabbi, charging disorderly conduct and breach of the peace, demanded he execute a prompt arrest, and the three young men were marched off to jail.

There they were searched, and one of them was found to be carrying two anti-Semitic reprints, another a party card indicating membership in the National Renaissance Party, a fascist-type organization in upper Manhattan. On seeing these documents and

hearing that the young men had been running about shouting "Heil Hitler!", the presiding judge, Schrecker, blew his top, accused the young men of wanting to dispose of him and his kind "in an oven," and fixed bail at the appalling, unheard-of sum, for such a charge, of \$15,000 each.

Three days later they were tried in a slapdash proceeding, in Adolescent Court, and sentenced, each, to 90 days in the workhouse. The sentence is being appealed by their lawyer, the estimable Dr. Bella V. Dodd.

We reached Mr. George Rundquist, director of the New York Civil Liberties Union, asked his opinion of the \$15,000 bail, and were relieved to hear him say, without hesitation, that it was preposterous and inordinate, and in effect a denial of constitutional rights. He also believes the 90-day sentence to be excessive. It is outside the province of the Civil Liberties Union to protest sentences that fall within the statutory limits of judicial discretion; but, says Mr. Rundquist, the New York chapter "may yet" issue a formal protest against the ridiculous bail. The rabbi who instigated the arrest was appalled at the harshness of the sentence, and has so expressed himself to Dr. Dodd, but the sentencing judge, the Honorable Vincent P. Rao, is not likely to be moved to mitigate the sentence for, he has stated, he received an avalanche of commendatory messages on his sternness.

We report at length on this episode, which would appear trivial, to suggest that passions have been loosed which need to be carefully observed. Two months ago another New York magistrate proposed that three bumbling young anti-Semites be electrocuted, a judgment in which the old fool, Mr. Carl Sandburg, solemnly concurred. What price are we to exact for political stupidity in an adolescent? Is a judge who is so panicked as to rave that it is the design of the defendants to put him away in an oven qualified to take a hand in the judicial mechanism? Is the judge who sentenced three young men to 90 days for insulting a group of persons who had attended a provocative pro-Communist rally—is such a man looking for letters of commendation, or pursuing justice?

2. Prudent action—and discriminating analysis—are especially needed as the evidence accumulates that the Kremlin, as part of its campaign to block the rearming of West Germany, is bent on exploiting anti-Semitic fears to further its policies. Communist propagandists or their dupes will pin the anti-Semitic label on anyone showing firm resistance to Communism, from Konrad Adenauer to Rabbi Benjamin Schultz. In its February 21 issue the *Worker*, official organ of the U.S. Communist Party, carried out a particularly noisome assignment in this international